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MONTE CARLO ONCE MORE IN FULL SWING

All the Riviera Filled With Wildly Spending Throngs

Prices Incredibly High in Many Restaurants Frequented by the Ultra Smart, but Regular Sojourners of Pre-War Days Avoid Gambling and Expensive Hotels, Really Enjoying the Winter Sunshine and Outdoor Sports---Mardi Gras Carnival at Nice Gayest in History---Tragedies of the Gaming Rooms Add a Sordid Side

NEVER in its long history as Europe's greatest pleasure ground has the Riviera entertained greater throngs than in the present 1920-21 season. Never have the stakes at the world famous Monte Carlo Casino run so high. Never have the gowns of the women promenading the terrace at Monte Carlo, the Promenade des Anglaises at Nice and of the boulevards at Mentone been more gorgeous. To observe and report on the facts about this season along the Mediterranean THE NEW YORK HERALD recently sent one of its correspondents there. His full accurate record printed herewith it most illuminating.

Gone are all the convalescent soldiers who thronged the coast towns and filled the villas during the war. In their stead is a vast host of war rich profiteers. True, the Riviera has drawn again many of its pre-war visitors, but the crowds on the whole are of a far different type.

And America contributed a billion dollars a year in charity to Europe during the four years of the war.

By JOHN McHUGH STUART.
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MONTE CARLO, Feb. 28.

PEOPLE still go to the Casino. In fact the Casino is crowded. It is crowded with people speaking English—English, Americans and Germans. The Germans speak English harder than anybody and they try to dress the part.

All of them throng around the trente et quarante tables, the roulette wheels and the baccarat. Inside the Casino the atmosphere is the dull greasy, gray of London, Paris and Berlin. Outside a gorgeous world is flooded with sunshine of the purest gold. Green hills sweep down to the sapphire sea, unbelievable white villas surrounded by unbelievable golden oranges bejewel the hill-sides that sweep up to the far away crown on snow capped Alps. And the sunshine lures one to lie full length on the stone terraces and let it soak in.

But the Casino is full all through the delicious morning, all through the golden afternoon and far into the silvery night. The Casino is full, tearooms are full, restaurants are crowded, and far into the next dawn people sit about calcium lit dance floors, drink tourist champagne and revel in the jazz of a score or more of bands in almost every one of which is some former leader of "The Silver Cornet Band of Feura Bush, U. S. A." or some other silver cornet band left deliberately stranded in Europe by the A. E. F.

The season has just got under way. Ever since the first of December the real denizens of the Riviera have been flowing here from all over Europe to villas large and small all the way from Cannes to Rapallo and filling the smaller and more permanent hotels. These people are not much seen in the Casino. They are the real supporters of the golf courses, of the polo clubs, of the race meets, and of all the wonderful healthy outdoor life that is possible on the Riviera—the Casino and all its little brothers to the contrary notwithstanding.

Lent Brought the Old Crowd Back to the Great Casino

But now, Shrove Tuesday and its carnivals being done with, have come not the denizens of the Riviera, but the denizens of the Casino. They are well known types. The sort of folk that used to throng the lobster palaces of Broadway or any other place where wealth and fashion, if not refinement, constitute a passport. These are the people that make the real "gay life" of the Riviera. They probably think they have come here for a change, but a close examination of their daily schedule and a comparison with the same schedule in London or New York indicates that about the only change is that during that brief half hour or so when, after rising late, their many engagements permit them a brief stroll out of doors, they pay the cold respect of a passing glance to the scintillating Mediterranean rather than to Piccadilly or Fifth avenue. Barring this single incident during that hour when the chorus girls remark, "My Gawd, ain't the sunshine awful!" they live the same lives as always.

And this year they seem to be leading them harder than ever. Stakes have run notoriously high at the Casino and the Sporting Club at Monte Carlo. The baccarat rooms at Nice are invariably filled, and even the terribly monotonous games of boule in the municipal casinos are well and heavily patronized. Here, as every place else, money has a new value. People barely turn their heads to look at a solitary diamond as large as a hazelnut; it would take the Koh-i-Noor to get a real thrill along the post-war Riviera.

For the ordinary mortal the result is horrifying. Unless you came early and made an ironclad agreement to live on pension throughout the season a single luncheon is likely to cost to-day as much as your entire day's expenses two weeks ago. Two weeks ago in the fashionable restaurants the prices of all but a very few extra specialties were plainly displayed on the menu

cards. Now you wander through a maze of "priceless" culinary marvels. And when, no matter how discreet your choice has been, you call for your bill it will exceed your wildest expectations. Many an American has sat down to lunch care free in the idea that a dollar in francs was worth roughly three dollars. Many an American thought that not even a restaurateur could catch up with that difference. How grossly he underestimated the hotel imagination!

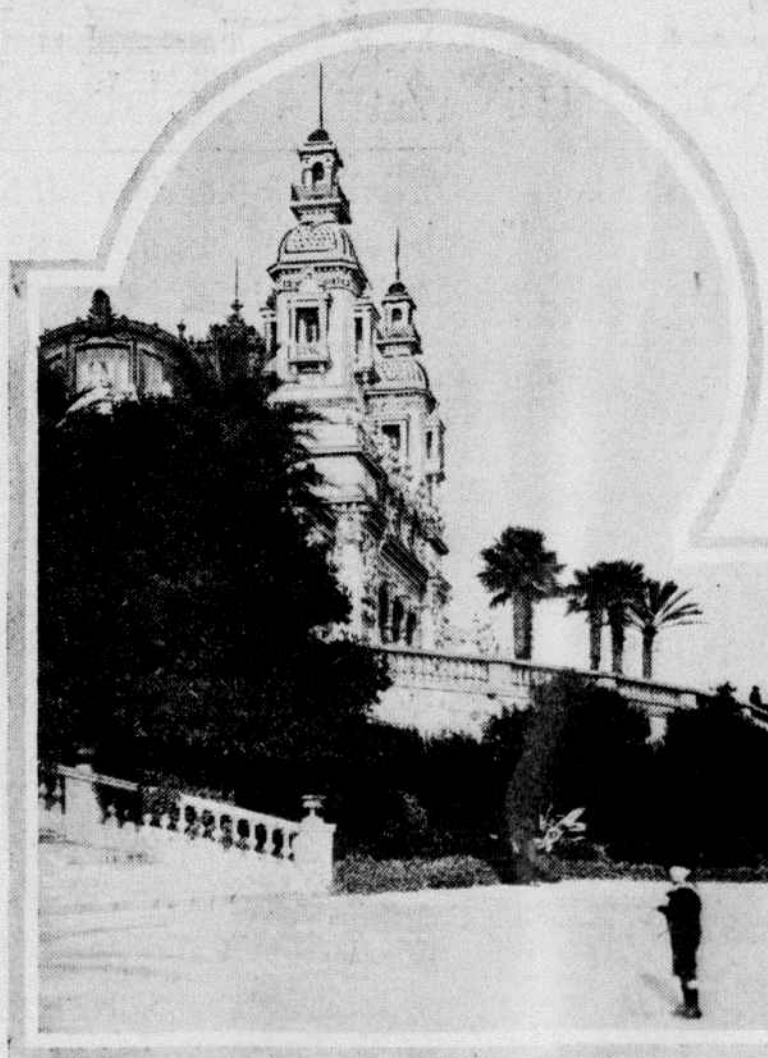
It must be said, however, that this state of affairs is only true at such establishments as all over the world are erected and garished with tinsel to catch that genus, one of which is born every minute. And all through the motley crowd one catches occasional glimpses of good people here for all the really good things the Riviera has to offer. The other day on the terrace of the Cafe de Paris, just outside the entrance to the Casino at Monte Carlo, facing the little circle of turf and palms around which the hacks and the char-a-bancs and the limousines roll, sat Admiral Guy Gaunt, so long a familiar figure in Washington. Hard and brown, an old soft collar over a decidedly miscellaneous necktie, tweeds that hadn't seen an iron for many a day and with a decidedly miscellaneous white dog on the end of a leash, the Admiral sat sipping "one of those things I like and never can order," with a half dozen men and women pals as hard and brown and cheerful and as un-Casino-like as himself. The Admiral had done eight miles on the road, two other men admitted to eighteen holes of golf on Mont Angel and two of the women had just come from a long stiff morning of sun-bath tennis.

That night in the Municipal Casino at Nice I saw Winston Churchill gayly making franc bets on the boules. But Mr. Churchill had played four periods of polo that afternoon and he was home and in bed at Cimiez well before midnight. So, largely like all the rest of the world, on the Riviera "you pay your money and you take your choice." You can stay in Nice and believe you are in Atlantic City; you can stay in the Casino at Monte Carlo and believe you are in a sort of glorified and enlivened opium den, or you can plunge into the most varied natural beauties in all the world—where the Alps meet the sea.

Probably nothing in this world has suffered so much from its own admirers as have the Alps. Mr. Baedeker describes them in meticulous terms of feet high, miles from the cab fare. Great poets have made the Alps one with the beautiful figments of their own imagination. And lesser souls, no less impressed, have had to content themselves with mere allusion to these mountains as "The Alps."

American Railway Engines Adopt European Whistle

We came happily to the Riviera. Not in the crowded wagon-lit from Paris, but slowly on an amiable train from Bordeaux. And there was no wagon-lit in our approach to Marseilles. Ten francs had secured us a comfortable first class compartment to ourselves from Bordeaux through the night until we awoke at Carcassonne. We waked to look out upon the ancient Roman walls about which that very morning thronged the busy life of the Midi wine-growers, much as it must have thronged in Marcus Aurelius's time, barring the fact that they brought their wine to town that morning in motor trucks and trailers.



Our train was hauled by an American engine. Every freight train and every freight yard we passed, down there under Caesar's walls, displayed an American box car or flat. But the raucous New York Central siren of that engine had been changed to a typical European tin whistle, and with its voice its character had changed, too. It stopped every place. There was no wagon restaurant on that train for breakfast. But the train stopped for a dozen breakfasts.

Past Toulon, with its old walls and its fine new naval port; past Hyeres and into St. Raphael, the first of the authentic colonies of white, red roofed and orange garden villas, with its promenade on the sea thronged with healthy, nice looking people, tramping in tweeds or flannels or spinning in big motor cars. This, obviously, was the life! Through Cannes, Antibes and Capgne to Nice, to Atlantic City, to the Promenade des Anglaises and the Quai des Etats-Unis. To more European editions of THE NEW YORK HERALD than copies of the Petit Nicolas. To waiters who didn't understand when you spoke French, but remembered you perfectly from the old days at the Knickerbocker, or was it Jack's? It is the life. Mostly for people from the good and thirsty old U. S. A. or fog bound England, where you

get your last at 10 P. M., French is completely ousted from the tongue of the Riviera. I had one horrible demonstration of it. Returning to our modest hotel at Nice after that first long night of jazz and bad champagne, the doorway of our modest hotel was locked. Finally a tornado of kicks and shakes at the door brought a large and athletic night watchman. I rushed to the attack, heaping upon him the French that one learned to use with taxi chauffeurs in Paris during 1918. Just as it was running out he answered:

"Vous êtes Français?" asked the athlete, calmly rolling up his right sleeve.

"Moi!" watching the muscles appear from under the sleeve, "Moi! Français! Sacre!" —I was going on boiling with indignation when he broke in.

"Américain?" he said.

"Of course I am, you poor boob!"

Sticking out his large, hairy hand, palm up, for a shake, he declared:

"So'm I. Put 'er there, kid, an' come in."

It was true. Born in French Canada, raised in Adams, Mass., he had joined the Yankee Division, the fighting Twenty-sixth. His natal tongue had come back to him in France and he had mustered out there, and there he was, talking Gringo like every

whirled around a sharp turn and Monaco with its old square castle, its great white museum and its palace on the rock came into sight.

We were out of France. The Monacan army, still looking the army of old days, of "The Chocolate Soldier" and "The Prince of Pilsen," with its gay breeches and its trick epaulettes; the army of the days before khaki and Armageddon greeted us. But it needed only a look to see that this army in very truth, like all the rest of the gay little principality, was merely tricked out to please the eye and painted to meet what a supposed sense of romance might demand. It needed but a look to show that nearly every man, Monacan though he might be, wore the Victory Ribbon and usually a Croix de Guerre, or even a higher French military decoration.

The bus drops down past the harbor where the Prince of Monaco's wonderful scientific navy, his yacht, lay moored, and up the hill to the winter pleasure capital of Europe. It stopped full in front of that ornate baroque doorway which leads to the world's greatest temple of chance, and full in front of the terrace of the Cafe de Paris,



PHOTOS BY KEYSTONE
At left is the famous Casino at Monte Carlo in its setting of verdure. Above, one of the promenades overlooking the Mediterranean.

one else in this far away fairy world.

Ten of the fifteen people in the motor coach from Nice to Monte Carlo one morning were Americans. And, to their credit be it said, they reacted with typical American enthusiasm to the thrills of that ride. Five of them, men and women, got out at Villefranche to walk back over the glorious top of the Grand Corniche before dark, with the full sweep of the far off snow-fields on their right and the full sweep of the Mediterranean on their left. Out through the picturesque old Italian colonnades of old Nice and up the precipitous side of the hill we swung at an amazing pace. These motor char-a-bancs have created a new Riviera for the thousands who have not attained that degree of uttermost wealth enabling one to drive one's own motor in Europe these days of high taxes and higher gasoline. Finely upholstered, finely sprung, with pneumatic tires and powerful engines, they reel off a comfortable thirty miles an hour over the frightful abysses, the hectic climbs and the swooping descents around terrifying corners of that long twisting road, every foot of which is beautiful with a dozen kinds of individual beauty, the bold sweep of the headlands, the tiny harbors behind the breakwaters in the coves, and the noble hill-sides which a generation of faithful visitors have converted into one long pleasure.

At Nice, in the harbor, lay a trim topsail schooner yacht, immaculate to the last polished cleat. The American flag flew from her taffrail. At Villefranche, where our own Mediterranean fleet used to find it so often convenient to call, a British training ship was disgorging barge load after barge load of neat and handsome young midshipmen, to romp up the road to Monte and try their luck inside and out. The peninsula of Beaulieu lay lazy in the marvellous sunshine, and finally we were

where beneath red and white umbrellas or out in the full sunshine lounged everybody.

The morning session in the gaming rooms had just ended. The last cracks from the pigeon range on the sea front had startled us as we rolled up the hill and with our own bus scores of hundreds of others of big private cars and little flaccers with the rangy legged ponies of Monaco were discharging their freights from Mont Angel, from Nice, from Cannes and from Mentone. It was The Hour of the day. Women in fur coats and women in white flannels, men in ulsters and men in tennis clothes—for one is never quite sure whether this room sunshine is or is not warm—thronged with good natured *cruiserie* about the little tables and beleaguered the waiters for Vermouth Cassis "with lots of ice." It is the hour when people meet on all the promenades of the Riviera, the hour when the serious plans for the day and night are made. And it is a brief hour. It is little more than thirty minutes. By that time the groups had begun to break up, to seek larger tables for luncheon, to run away to their villas or hotels, to get ready for the afternoon in the gaming rooms, at the Nice racetrack, on the links, the tennis courts, the mountain roads or the pigeon range by the sea.

Big Winnings Reported at Monaco This Season

And that afternoon, despite the sunshine outside, the Casino was full. There was one crowd that came early. It is doubtful if they had eaten lunch. They were there when the doors opened and they were first in and in the chairs around the tables. Poor looking, almost shabby, men and women, looking old, whatever their age might be. Most of them held little note books before them with endless sequences of figures.

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